



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Administration for Community Living

#### Availability of Program Application Instructions for Title VII, Part C of the Rehabilitation Act, Centers for Independent Living (CILs) to Expand the Public Health Workforce

**Title:** Expanding the Public Health Workforce within the Disability Networks: Centers for Independent Living.

**Announcement Type:** Initial.

**Statutory Authority:** The statutory authority for grants under this program announcement is Section 2501 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-2) and awards authorized under Part C of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29. U.S.C. 796f *et seq.*), Centers for Independent Living, shall be provided funding under this opportunity.

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:** 93.432.

**DATES:** The deadline date for the submission of the Expanding the Public Health Workforce within Disability Networks: Centers for Independent Living is 11:59 PM Eastern Time **[PLEASE INSERT DATE- 30 days after date of FRN publication]**.

### I. Funding Opportunity Description

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) announced a new funding opportunity to expand the public health workforce within the disability networks. Public health promotes and protects the health of people and the communities where they live, learn, work, and play. The disability networks funded by the Administration for Community Living (ACL) play an essential role in that work. The disability networks consist of trusted organizations and programs that reach and provide services and supports to people with disabilities in every community throughout the nation, including those related to public health such as health and wellness education and information, counseling, case management and guidance related to health and social needs, as well as how to access those supports. These networks have over 50 years of

community experience and possess intimate knowledge of the public health and other resources available and the needs of people with disabilities in their direct area.

As part of its ongoing COVID-19 response efforts, the Biden-Harris Administration is investing federal funds through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA)<sup>1</sup> to recruit, hire, and train public health workers to respond to the pandemic and prepare for future public health challenges. Specifically, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will “carry out activities related to establishing, expanding, and sustaining a public health workforce...,” ARPA § 2501(a), and funds may be used to support costs, including wages and benefits, of a range of public health professionals including but not limited to social support professionals, community health workers, communication and policy experts and “...other positions as may be required to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19...,” ARPA § 2501(b)(1).

To help advance these efforts, ACL has created the Expanding the Public Health Workforce within Disability Networks program. This program aims to increase through the support of wages and benefits the number of public health professionals within the disability networks to address the unique needs of individuals with disabilities. Public health professionals supported through this program may provide a wide range of public health services and supports, including provision of culturally affirmative and linguistically accessible information, access assistance for vaccines and boosters, transition and diversion from high-risk congregate settings to community living, provision and connections to health and wellness programs, activities that address social isolation and social determinants of health, and other activities that support the public health and wellbeing of people with disabilities.

Centers for Independent Living (CILs) under the Rehabilitation Act (Rehab Act) – the eligible entities for this opportunity – shall be provided funding to support new staff or increase the full-time equivalent (FTE) of existing staff under this opportunity to carry out public health services

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<sup>1</sup> American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Pub. L. No. 117-2, 135 Stat 4 (Mar. 11, 2021).

and supports. Although not required for funding, grantees are encouraged to explore options for funding to sustain the new FTE after the end of the grant. There is no cost sharing or matching requirement for this funding.

Award recipients will be required to submit annual progress reports in the form of a written summary on the number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) funded, type of public health professional(s) hired, and the activities they are engaged in to advance public health. To be eligible to receive this grant, the CIL must submit a Letter of Assurance to ACL containing all the assurances required, (see below, “Section III. Eligibility Criteria and Other Requirements” and “Section IV. Submission Information”). CILs that do not submit a Letter of Assurance or otherwise indicate no desire to receive funds, will be excluded from receiving funds.

ACL may extend deadlines based on the need of the COVID-19 response, e.g., to meet unanticipated issues related to COVID-19 and/or to allow impacted CILs that missed the cut-off date to submit a letter of assurance for consideration. ACL intends to issue notices of award as soon as possible with an estimated start date of March 1, 2022. However, the actual award may be released earlier or later than that date. Because the total amount awarded to each grantee is contingent upon the total number of grantees applying for funding, grant awards will be issued after ACL receives responses from all eligible CILs. Regardless of the date of award, the funding will be available until September 30, 2024. Grantees may use the funds over any period of time before this date but are encouraged to use the funding as soon as possible to have the greatest impact.

## **II. Award Information**

### **1. Funding Instrument Type**

These awards will be made in the form of new grants, evenly distributed to eligible entities.

### **2. Anticipated Total Funding per Budget Period**

Awards made under this announcement will have an estimated start date of March 1, 2022 and an end date of September 30, 2024.

The total available funding for this opportunity is \$38,297,600.

Eligible entities who do not complete assurance requirements below, or otherwise indicate no desire to receive funds will be excluded from receiving funds. This will have the effect of increasing the amount of funds available for eventual recipients.

ACL will distribute the \$38,297,600 evenly to all eligible entities to ensure a sufficient level of funding to provide substantive support for the public health workforce, which equates to a minimum award of \$104,069. This figure is based on the current number of eligible entities and would rise if some eligible entities refuse or are deemed ineligible.

### **III. Eligibility Criteria and Other Requirements**

#### **1. Eligible Entities**

The eligible entity for these awards is designated by ACL as Centers for Independent Living under Part C of the Rehabilitation Act.

#### **2. Match**

Cost Sharing or Matching is not required.

#### **3. Other Requirements**

##### **A. Letter of Assurance**

A Letter of Assurance is required to be submitted by CILs in order to receive an award. The Letter of Assurance must include the following:

1. Assurance that the award recipient is an entity designated as a Part C funded CIL under the Rehab Act.
2. Assurance that funds will be spent in ways consistent with the purpose of the funding to support the cost of wages and benefits for public health professionals, directly or through contract such as:
  - Case investigator,
  - Contact tracer,
  - Social support specialist,

- Community health worker,
- Public health nurse,
- Disease intervention specialist,
- Epidemiologist,
- Program manager,
- Laboratory personnel,
- Informaticians,
- Communication and policy experts,
- Other positions as may be required to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.

3. Assurance to provide semi-annual federal financial reports and annual program reports that include the number and type of full-time equivalents hired, and activities performed to advance public health.

#### **B. DUNS Number**

All grant applicants must obtain and keep current a D–U–N–S number from Dun and Bradstreet. It is a nine-digit identification number, which provides unique identifiers of single business entities. The D–U–N–S number can be obtained from:  
<https://iupdate.dnb.com/iUpdate/viewiUpdateHome.htm>.

#### **C. Intergovernmental Review**

Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, is not applicable to these grant applications.

### **IV. Submission Information**

#### **1. Letter of Assurance**

To receive funding, eligible entities must provide a Letter of Assurance containing all the information outlined in Section III above.

Letters of Assurance should be addressed to: Jennifer Johnson, Deputy Commissioner,  
Administration on Disabilities, Administration for Community Living.

Letters of Assurance should be submitted ***electronically via email*** to PHWF@acl.hhs.gov.

## 2. Submission Dates and Times

To receive consideration, Letters of Assurance must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on  
[PLEASE INSERT DATE-30 days after date of FRN publication.] Letters of Assurance should  
be submitted electronically via email and have an electronic time stamp indicating the date/time  
submitted.

## **VII. Agency Contacts**

### 1. Programmatic and Submission Issues

Direct programmatic and submission inquiries to PHWF@acl.hhs.gov.

Dated: January 6, 2022.

Alison Barkoff,  
Principal Deputy Administrator.  
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